Demand V—Customs.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS: Mr. President, I move for a grant not exceeding Rs. '82 lakh under Customs.

Motion 41.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: I gave notice of motion 41 which stands in my name with a view to the reduction of the Sub-Inspectors who are detailed for duty under Customs. Having regard to the discussions that have already taken place, I do not make that motion.

The following motion was not therefore made by Mr. G. Parameswaran Pillai:

41. *To reduce the allotment of Rs. 54,015 for establishment by Rs. 1,000.*

Motion 42.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: Sir, I beg to make the following motion:

42. To omit the allotment of Rs. 2,196 for upkeep and maintenance of motor boat under 5. A.—Customs Contingencies.

The boat is evidently intended for the prevention of smuggling. Now, a motor boat is perhaps the most ill-advised vehicle in which to go about for the said purpose. The reasons are obvious and I need not elaborately dwell upon this point. I would just invite the opinion of the Commissioner as to how far he has succeeded in detecting smuggling with the use of the motor boat. The noise it produces and the glaring light it emits will only scare away the smugglers. I wish to know what exactly is the purpose served by the motor boat.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS: Sir, the motor boat is for the customs house at Arukutty. During the last two or three years I find that the traffic in motor boats between Travancore and Cochin has risen considerably. Not less than 20 or 30 motor boats are plying between Alleppey and Cochin. These motor boats are crossing the frontier without touching the chowkey and the chowkey officers stand helpless as there is no means of getting at these boats for examination. It is absolutely necessary for the safety of revenue that these boats should be brought to the chowkey. When I was there, I one day had the good fortune to have a boat at my disposal for the day and I used it to seize another boat and fined the man Rs. 2 for not coming up for examination. It was very necessary to have a motor boat without subjecting the Government to loss and without subjecting our officers to demoralisation and helplessness. If they find a boat, they are unable to stop it. I, therefore, think that it is very necessary to have a motor boat at the customs office. That boat is used during nights also to patrol the lake and to see that dutiable articles are not taken through the lake; but members who are acquainted with that place will find that it is a narrow lake which can be traversed by simply pushing the boat across. It will take some time for loading, if any, arrangement for loading takes place. The motor boat will prevent smuggling. Our men could seize it immediately and

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai.]

at once give information to the land-patrol men. And the moral effect of the existence of the boat is also very great. I do not expect much benefit from this boat with regard to tobacco-smuggling. There is another boat for the prevention of tobacco-smuggling.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: The present one is under customs.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS: I have explained the use of the customs boat.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI. Sir, how many instances have there been of boats passing without touching Arukutty?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS: Many instances. We have not recorded them.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: Will the Commissioner please inform the House as to how many boats pass this way and whether he had occasion to use the motor boat? Otherwise this House will not be in a position to vote.

PRESIDENT: Twenty to thirty boats daily. He has said already.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: Sir, unless the Commissioner tells us that there has been any occasion to overtake the boats and to detect smuggling, I think this motor boat is absolutely unnecessary and useless. If it is only to find the number of the boat, he can do it by means of a binocular and punish the boat. As for detective work, a motor boat is the least useful. When the smugglers go in one direction, it will take half an hour for the motor boat to adjust its direction and try to overtake them. It will be like setting a belled cat in the midst of rats. They will all fly away at the noise.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: Sir, I am sorry that I cannot congratulate the Excise Department on this novel method of detecting smuggling, in spite of the wealth of reasons that Mr. Van Ross has placed before us. If the argument is that the seizing of motor boats is ordinarily rendered difficult by the circumstance that boats go to and fro without obeying the law, then that is a grave matter. It is respect for law that is more important, that is very much more important than twenty motor boats plying through Arukutty. And, after all, where will they go? They will go to Alleppey or Ernaculam and not to Van Die-Men's land, or the Atlantic Ocean. They can be very easily caught. Certainly, if it is a question of patrolling, it is one of the *worst* devices that the genius of man can have invented for use in detecting and patrol. We all know the noise made by these motor boats, and once they catch the noise, the smugglers will all vanish into the unseen. I have heard of an old story of an attempt to catch a bird; that is an ingenious method and consists in putting a little butter over its head; the butter should dissolve and flow into the eyes of the bird, and the poor thing, thus blinded, would not be able to move about. That is the kind of

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

thing that the motor boat will serve in the work of detection. I think that, in the annals of crime detection, motor boats have not played any part, and we have to remember that, for hundreds of years, much of the smuggling *was* detected on the Arukutty side without these contrivances of civilization.

MR. C. J. CURIEN: Sir, if the articles that are carried by motor boats to the Cochin side are to be watched, it is essential that there should be a motor boat in the customs office at Arukutty. Mr. Velu Pillai said that the boat would not go away altogether, that it might go to Ernaculam or Alleppey, and that when it came back it could be seized. The articles will be unloaded at Ernaculam and it will be then impossible to detect the smuggled articles. The boat is intended not for the detection of smuggled articles but to search the motor boats in which dutiable articles are being carried. Some time ago, there were no motor boats carrying articles; there were only ordinary boats, and then there was no necessity for a motor boat to patrol. As it is, the boat is surely necessary.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: Will Mr. Curien be pleased to tell us how many motor boat prosecutions there were during the last five years?

MR. C. J. CURIEN: You must apply to the Excise Commissioner for the information.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF: Sir, I wish to know whether there have been *any* specific cases of seizure of motor boats by the Assistant Excise Commissioner or the Excise Commissioner?

With regard to their being able to seize smugglers and so on, I agree with Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai and other gentlemen in so far as these boats would scare them off. There are many creeks and corners in the Arukutty lake. In the shallow water, a motor boat cannot go on. As the motor boat will only scare the smugglers, it is absolutely useless. But it has a moral effect when kept on the backwaters. There are specific cases in which boat-owners were punished for not complying with requisitions to stop at Arukutty. There is no law on the point, and under the law the boat-owners will not be punishable at all. But, are there any specific cases of the seizure of motor boats passing without stopping at the Arukutty frontier?

MR. JOHN MACKIE: Sir, I know of one case personally, in which a motor boat actually passed without touching at the customs house. I think that, for this purpose, a motor boat is absolutely essential.

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI. മോട്ടർ ബോട്ടും അതു സംബന്ധമായ ചിലവുകളും അനുവദിക്കാൻ പാടില്ലെന്നുള്ള അഭിപ്രായത്തോടു ഞാൻ യോജിക്കുന്നു. ഈ സംഗതിയെപ്പറ്റി എന്റെ മുൻഗാമികളായ മെസ്സേഴ്സ് ജി. പരമേശ്വരൻപിള്ള, ടി. കെ. വേലുപ്പിള്ള ഇവർ പറഞ്ഞിട്ടുള്ളതിൽ കൂടുതലായി ഒന്നും തന്നെ പറയേണ്ട ആവശ്യമുണ്ടെന്നു തോന്നുന്നില്ല. മോട്ടർബോട്ട് അത്യാവശ്യമാണെന്നുള്ളതിനെ കമിഷണർ പറഞ്ഞ പോലെ കായൽക്കരയിലൊന്ന് വള്ളങ്ങളും യാത്രക്കാരെ കയറ്റി കൊണ്ടു പോകുന്ന മോട്ടർ ബോട്ടുകളും ചിലയിൽ അടുപ്പിക്കാതെ കൊണ്ടു പൊയ്ക്കളയുന്ന ഏർപ്പാടു തടയുന്നതിന് ഒരു മോട്ടർ ബോട്ടു കൂടിയേകഴിയൂ എന്നാണ്. അധികാരികൾ അവരുടെ ജോലികൾ കണിശമായും, കൃത്യനിഷ്ഠയോടും ചെയ്തു കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നതായാൽ

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[Mr. A. J. Van Ross.]

ആ വഴി ഗതാഗതം ചെയ്യുന്ന എല്ലാ ആളുകളും ഗവർൺമെൻറിന്നിന്ന നിശ്ചയിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള നിയമങ്ങളെ ബഹുമാനിക്കാതിരിക്കയില്ലെന്നമാത്രമെ കൂട്ടത്തലായിഎനിക്ക് ഇൗകൌൺസിലിൽ അറിയിക്കാനുള്ളു, മോട്ടാർ ബോട്ടിനെ വച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നതിന് ഇതൊരു ന്യായമായ കാരണമായി സ്വീകരിക്കാവുന്നതല്ല.

RAO BAHADUR K. A. KRISHNA AIYANGAR: Sir, the necessity for the maintenance of an efficient agency for the prevention and detection of smuggling is conceded. Objection is now taken to the substitution of a motor boat for the ordinary country canoes in use till now. About twenty years ago, a veteran smuggler sought my professional help in connection with a criminal case in which his son was involved. He was a guest of the Government on several occasions in one of the criminal jails at Kottayam for evading payments of customs duty at Arukutty. In the course of our conversation, I learnt that the man had successfully smuggled Coimbatore tobacco for several years with comparative impunity and that only on rare occasions had the preventive staff succeeded in catching him with the contraband cargo. My curiosity was roused and I asked him how smugglers managed to avoid the vigilance of the chowkey staff. In answer he told me that the smugglers would generally select a dark and stormy night and make a dash through the backwater from the Cochin side. Chowkey boats would take up the chase as soon as the boats were sighted. In the majority of cases, the smugglers escaped capture. Sometimes, when the smuggler realised that escape with the cargo was impossible, he would make a dash for the nearest shore, beach the boat and then run for a place of concealment and safety. Sometimes, he was caught with the cargo. I had no reason to doubt the correctness of this version. Smugglers are a desperate class of people. The work of the preventive staff is attended with personal risk. The interests of public revenue and the safety of the preventive staff would justify the proposed expenditure on a motor boat at Arukutty. I oppose the motion.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: Sir, my friend, the Excise Commissioner, has himself suggested in the course of his statement that, so far as the detection of smuggling is concerned, a motor boat is not very useful. What he said was—

PRESIDENT: I do not think you have understood him.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: So far as Arukutty is concerned, the Commissioner was under the impression that the former motion was still being discussed. Now, so far as this case is concerned, if it is absolutely essential that a motor boat should be maintained there, not for the purpose of detecting smuggling, but for the use of the officers in the locality as Mr. Krishna Aiyangar put it, I need hardly add anything to what I have already said.

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS: Sir, Mr. G. Paramesvaran Pillai says that we want a motor boat for our own officers. The boat is there to enable the officers to seize other boats trying to run away without undergoing examination. It is also useful to frighten the smugglers.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: Is there any instance in which a seizure was actually made?

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS: We had one case.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: Sir, then I beg to withdraw the motion.

The motion was, by leave, withdrawn.

Motions 43 to 45.

The following motions were not made:

MR. N. PADMANABHA PILLAI:

43. To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 82 lakh under Demand V by Rs. 20,000.

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI:

44. To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 82 lakh under Demand V by Rs. 1,000.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON:

45. To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 82 lakh under Demand V by Rs. 1,000.

PRESIDENT: The question is that the Government be granted a sum not exceeding Rs. 82 lakh under Demand V—Customs.

The grant was made.

Demand VI—Forest.

MR. R. DHANUKOTI PILLAI: Sir, I rise to move for a grant not exceeding Rs. 8·56 lakhs under Demand VI—Forest.

Motion 46

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR: Mr. President, I do not wish to make the motion standing in my name which is as follows:

46. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 28,000 for travelling allowances by Rs. 7,000.

I sent up notice of this motion mainly to draw the attention of the House to the shifting of the Conservator's office from Quilon to Trivandrum. The Conservator and the Divisional Forest Officers naturally should have their stations as near the forests as possible. If, for any reason, a hundred trips are taken to Kottayam in a year, they might be able to cover a mileage of something like five to eight thousand rupees. But after a short talk with the present head of the department I have come to entertain so much confidence in his good intentions and in his patriotism that I do not press the motion.

The motion was not made.

Motion 47.

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI. Sir, I beg to make the following motion:

47. To omit the allotment of Rs. 25,200 for the Forest College.

കൊല്ലത്ത് പ്ലൈവുഡ്ഫാക്ടറിയിരിക്കുന്ന ഫാറസ്റ്റ് കോളേജിനെ പിഴവിനായി നീക്കിയിട്ടുള്ള [illegible] അനുവദിക്കാൻ പാടില്ലെന്നാണ് എനിക്കു പ്രത്യേകം.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly